



Press Release

Press Release Announcement -- August 15, 2002 -- For Immediate Use

Pennsylvania's August Crop Forecast

HARRISBURG --- Based on August 1, 2002 forecasts for yield and production, the **Keystone state's** farmers expect to produce more oats, barley, winter wheat, and tobacco than last year. Production is expected to be below last year for corn for grain, soybeans, alfalfa and other hay, apples, pears, grapes, and peaches according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service.

Corn for grain acreage for harvest, at 950,000, is 4 percent less than last year. Based on crop conditions as of August 1, corn yield is forecast at 90 bushels per acre, which is 8 bushels less than last year's yield. The corn for grain production of 85.5 million bushels is 12 percent less than last year.

Oats acreage for harvest, at 120,000, is up 4 percent from last year. Based on crop conditions as of August 1, the oat yield is forecast at 64 bushels per acre, which is 1 bushel less than last year. The resulting oat production of 7.8 million bushels will be 4 percent above last year. Barley acreage for harvest, at 65,000, is 5,000 acres more than 2001. Barley yield is set at 73 bushels per acre, down 3 bushels from the July 1 estimate, but up 3 bushels from a year ago. Barley production is expected to be 4.7 million bushels, 13 percent above last year's production. Winter wheat acres harvested totaled 185,000, which is 16 percent more than last year. The August 1 winter wheat yield is estimated at 59 bushels per acre, unchanged from the July 1 forecast and 7 bushels per acre more than 2001. The resulting winter wheat production of 10.9 million bushels will be 31 percent above last year.

Soybean acreage for harvest is set at 380,000, down 25,000 acres from last year. The expected yield of 33 bushels per acre is down 2 bushels from 2001. Production is set at 12.5 million bushels, down 12 percent from last year.

Alfalfa acreage harvested for dry hay is estimated at 600,000, down 70,000 acres from 2001. Yield is forecast at 2.4 tons per acre, down 4 percent (or 0.1 ton) from last year. The resulting production, at 1.44 million tons, is 14 percent less than last year. Other hay acres harvested for dry hay is estimated at 1,100,000, up 120,000 acres from last year. The expected yield of 1.60 tons per acre is down 11 percent from the 1.80 tons in 2001. Total production, at 1.76 million tons, is just slightly less than 2001.

Southern Maryland-type tobacco acres for harvest is 1,300, up 18 percent from last year. The yield is forecast at 1,900 pounds, which is up slightly from the 1,860 pounds per acre produced in 2001. Production is estimated at 2.47 million pounds, which is 21 percent more than 2001. Pennsylvania seed-leaf tobacco acreage of 2,100, is 100 acres more than last year. The forecast yield of 2,100 pounds is up 40 pounds per acre from 2001. Production, at 4.41 million pounds, is 7 percent more than last year.

Based on August 1 conditions, the state's apple crop is expected to total 470 million pounds, down 2 percent from last year's 480 million pounds. Pear output, at 5,300 tons, is down 4 percent from last year. Grape production of 45,000 tons is down 27 percent from a year earlier. Peach production is forecast at 60.0 million pounds, down 20 percent from last year's production.

United States: Corn production is forecast at 8.89 billion bushels, down 7 percent from last year and 10 percent below 2000. If realized, this would be the lowest production since 1995. Based on August 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 125.2 bushels per acre, down 13.0 bushels from last year. Yields are mostly lower than 2001 across much of the U.S. as wet weather during planting caused delays in the eastern Corn Belt. Also, persistent hot, dry weather has stunted growth and limited yield potential over many areas of the U.S. Farmers expect to harvest 71.0 million acres of corn for grain, down 1.08 million acres from June, but up 3 percent from 2001.

Soybean production is forecast at 2.63 billion bushels, down 9 percent from 2001, and 5 percent below 2000. Based on August 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 36.5 bushels per acre, down 3.1 bushels from 2001. If realized, this would be the lowest production since 1996. Yields are mostly lower than 2001 in the western Corn Belt, central Great Plains, Ohio Valley, and Atlantic Coast States. However, higher yields were reported in the Upper and Middle Mississippi Valley and southern Great Plains states. Area planted, at 73.0 million acres, is up slightly from June, but down 1 percent from last year. Acreage for harvest, is estimated at 72.0 million acres, down 1 percent from 2001.

The final winter wheat production forecast is 1.16 billion bushels, the lowest level since 1971. This is down 2 percent from last month, and 15 percent below 2001. The U.S. yield is forecast at 38.9 bushels per acre.

Oat production for the 2002 crop year is forecast at 143 million bushels, 3 percent less than the July 1 forecast, but 22 percent above last year's 117 million bushels. Area for harvest is estimated at 2.63 million acres, unchanged from July 1, but 38 percent more than last year. The yield is forecast at 54.2 bushels per acre, 1.9 bushels below the July 1 forecast and down 7.1 bushels from 2001. If realized, this would be the lowest yield since 1991.

Barley production for 2002 is forecast at 252 million bushels, down 5 percent from the July forecast, but 1 percent above 2001. Yields are expected to average 55.9 bushels per acre, a decrease of 3.1 bushels from July and down 2.3 bushels from last year. Area harvested, at 4.50 million acres, is unchanged from the July estimate, but up 210,000 acres from 2001.

Production of alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures for dry hay is forecast at 74.6 million tons, down 7 percent from last year. Yields are expected to average 3.09 tons, down 0.28 ton from last year. Harvested area is 24.1 million acres, unchanged from the June estimate, but up 1 percent from 2001. The decrease in yields compared to 2001 is due to the poor growing conditions experienced in most areas of the country during July. The yield in all but 6 states is at or below last year's level.

The first production forecast of other dry hay for 2002 is 78.0 million tons, up 2 percent from 2001. Based on August 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 1.92 tons per acre, down slightly from last year. Harvested area is estimated at 40.6 million acres, unchanged from the June estimate, but up 2 percent from 2001.

All tobacco production for 2002 is forecast at 922 million pounds, down 7 percent from 2001 and 12 percent below 2000. If realized, this will be the smallest crop since 1908. Harvested acres are expected to be 435,460 acres, up 1 percent from last year. Yields for 2002 are estimated to average 2,117 pounds per acre, 176 pounds lower than a year ago.

The nation's apple production is forecast at 9.21 billion pounds, down 4 percent from last year and 14 percent below 2000. Peach crop forecast is estimated at 2.53 billion pounds, 1 percent below the July forecast but 4 percent above 2001. All pear production for 2002 is forecast at 944,550 tons, down 6 percent from last year and 2 percent below 2000. Grape production is forecast at 7.10 million tons, up 8 percent from 2001, but 8 percent below 2000.